



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC UTILITY CONTROL

DONALD W. DOWNES
CHAIRPERSON

THE ENERGY & TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

House Bill 6607: AAC ELECTRIC SUBSTATIONS IN RESIDENTIAL AREAS

March 2, 2009

TESTIMONY OF CHAIMAN DONALD W. DOWNES

The Department of Public Utility Control (Department) strongly opposes House Bill No. 6607. House Bill No. 6607 would require a minimum of three-fourths approval from the membership of the Connecticut Siting Council (CSC) in order to approve the siting of a substation in a residential area.

The trend of refusing siting of important infrastructure projects cannot be supported any longer by this body or others who place aesthetic values over the needs for reliability and consumer benefits which improved infrastructure and facilities yield. The Department cannot express strongly enough the value that upgrading and improving the state's transmission and facilities' infrastructure adds to our economy and energy goals. Performing such upgrades not only saves consumers money in the long run, it also strengthens Connecticut's ability to provide safe and reliable services.

We cannot have it both ways, expressing goals of fuel diversity, quality services, and the development of renewable, noncarbon resources while creating barriers to the construction and enhancement of our transmission and other necessary facilities. The issue of institutional barriers to these efforts has not been a productive debate for our State and has only served as an impetus for increased federal involvement and oversight in state's authority.

We need to preserve our State energy goals, attributes and regulatory structures if we hope to develop and access potential renewable energy resources and aide the struggle for finding cheaper, cleaner and more efficient ways to heat our homes and sustain our State's economies. An important part of this effort is to continue to enhance and improve our state's energy infrastructure and facilities. To this end, now is not the time to limit the CSC's procedures or to create additional institutional barriers to the siting of needed facilities.

The Department thanks the Committee for this opportunity to present testimony at this hearing and is available for questions.